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Mrs Elaine Barry  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Barry

### **Short inspection of Oak Green School**

Following my visit to the school on 14 September 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in May 2013.

### **This school continues to be good.**

Your compelling vision for an engaging and challenging education has raised pupils' aspirations and enabled many to achieve to the best of their ability. There is a strong sense of joy about learning in the school. Staff morale is high. Staff know that you value their hard work and that you take care to manage their workload. They also appreciate the opportunities for career development that you have given them. Pupils try their hardest in lessons and behave well. They are polite to visitors and considerate to each other. Pupils respect their teachers and appreciate the many clubs and visits that staff organise for them. Pupils know and understand the values that underpin much of the school's work. One pupil said, 'Everybody is kind because we follow the golden values.'

You have won the respect and admiration of parents, who are highly complimentary about what you and your staff do for their children and families. They reserve particular praise for the warm and welcoming climate you have created. One parent said, 'They can't do enough for us!'

You also play an effective role in raising standards in other local schools. At the request of the local authority, you currently act as executive headteacher to a nearby primary school. This additional role has enabled you to give members of your leadership team the chance to take on new responsibilities at Oak Green or to gain experience in supporting teachers in other schools.

At the last inspection, the lead inspector identified many strengths in the school. He noted that teaching and leadership, including governance, were effective. He also commented favourably on pupils' good behaviour and the strong progress they made in reading, writing and mathematics. You have successfully maintained and continued to build on these positive features. In the same inspection, the lead inspector recommended that leaders take steps to improve pupils' progress in writing and to ensure that all teaching is consistently good. You have taken effective action to address both of these recommendations. However, you and your senior team are not complacent. You rightly recognise that outcomes in phonics need to improve. You have also agreed with governors a target to increase the proportion of pupils achieving scores at greater depth in reading and mathematics in national tests.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. The safety and welfare of all pupils has an exceptionally high profile at the school. Governors check that all agreed child protection policies are followed. Staff recognise that child protection is everyone's responsibility. They receive regular training in keeping pupils safe from a variety of risks, including child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. Leaders strongly encourage them to report any such concerns. Rigorous checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of all those who work or volunteer in the school. Well-established systems are in place to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families get the timely and effective support they need. Record-keeping is meticulous and leaders are tenacious in following up all referrals.

Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand everyday risks such as crossing the road and using the internet. Pupils say that there is very little bullying in their school and that if it happens teachers deal with it well. Pupils are confident that they can talk to their teachers if they are worried about anything.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look in particular at the following aspects of the school's work:
  - the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
  - how well leaders have addressed the recommendations in the previous report to improve pupils' writing skills and ensure that all teaching is consistently good
  - the progress made by children in the early years and how well pupils in key stage 1 are doing in phonics
  - how effectively the curriculum meets pupils' needs and prepares them for their next steps
  - the quality of strategic direction provided by governors.

- Following the last inspection, you wisely brought in a more structured approach to the teaching of writing. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' presentation, spelling and use of vocabulary have led to rapid improvements in outcomes in writing. For example, in 2016 pupils at the end of key stage 2 made progress in writing well above the national average. Teachers across the school go to great lengths to inspire pupils' writing. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and write fluently, accurately and for different purposes. They take great pride in their written work in all subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 loved talking and writing about their summer-term trip to the seaside.
- Your experienced subject leaders have played an important role in ensuring consistently good teaching over time. Subject leaders carry out rigorous checks on how well pupils are doing in their learning. They also ensure that pupils who need to catch up get appropriate support. Subject leaders lead training and give well-targeted advice to help teachers improve their skills. Teachers plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs and they make effective use of questioning to extend pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils make strong progress in their learning.
- You are rightly proud of the progress children make in the early years. Children join the Nursery with communication skills that are well below those expected for their age. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes have created stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. They use a variety of effective approaches to help children develop their speech and language skills. For example, children in Reception were engrossed when combining words and gestures to create their own stories. By the time they leave the Reception Year, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics remains below the national average. With your leadership team, you have analysed outcomes carefully and made improvements to the teaching of phonics. In particular, you have increased the provision for phonics in Reception. This means that by the time they reach Year 1, pupils have a more secure grasp of the sounds letters make. Consequently, a higher proportion of pupils currently in Year 1 are on track to reach the expected standard this year.
- You ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to be ready for secondary school. In addition, you are determined that any barriers that might prevent pupils achieving to the best of their ability are removed. Consequently, all pupils benefit from access to the full range of subjects contained in the national curriculum and are well prepared for their next steps in education. Provisional outcomes at key stage 2 in 2017 show that pupils achieved scores above national averages in reading and mathematics. You now aim to ensure that the proportion of pupils achieving scores at greater depth in national tests is consistently higher than that found nationally.
- Governors provide strong strategic direction to the school. They are not afraid to challenge leaders, and they carry out all their statutory duties diligently. They check what leaders tell them by visiting the school, and they take account of reports from the local authority officer linked to the school. They provide wise oversight of the school's finances. They constantly look beyond the horizon in

order to secure the long-term future of the school, for example by exploring multi-academy trust status.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of pupils in Year 1 achieving the expected standard in phonics matches or exceeds the national average
- the proportion of pupils achieving scores at greater depth in reading and mathematics at key stage 1 and key stage 2 matches or exceeds national averages.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Buckinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Gary Holden  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I carried out visits to classes in each year group, accompanied by you and your deputy and assistant headteachers. I also held meetings with you and with members of your leadership team to discuss pupils' progress, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. I held a meeting with a group of subject leaders. I also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. In addition, I met with the education adviser from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust who is attached to the school.

I reviewed a range of documentation that you made available to me, including your self-evaluation form and school improvement plan. I also reviewed the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding. I met with a group of pupils, and I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. I took account of six responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including five free-text responses. I also considered 23 responses to the staff survey and five responses to the pupil survey.